

*The mere contours of it*

On a particle of dust, I'll build a home - we'll plant our roots and  
bury toes in the sound of violins! Our molecular bedroom (small  
and blue) will float along the waves of music pushing though the  
walls like a kayak on the water, like a train track on a bridge.

We'll let jazz and Brahms and Amadeus Mozart carry us far to  
ancient mud castles on the edge of the Ivory Coast, through

grainy wind and gritty sun, across mountains of pebbles and  
gold reflections of electric starlight, neon flashes of science,

and though birds and bugs might fill our flat suburban ears  
and flowery ropes of yellow and fuchsia explode inside our

empty eyes, there is nothing so striking as the shape that letters  
make when they all spell out your name,

arranged *just* so,

sitting still,

breathless.

*Watching tv, regretting everything I ever said*

Close-ups, quick cuts, portraits, jump shots -

Your eyes, your ears, you kissing my head,  
PBR in the kitchen, all dancing in sneakers -

around my moving waist, your hands -  
on the bare patch of skin, your hands -

looking at me, my face, my eyes -  
seeing you and smiling - your eyes -

wanting nothing - your look -  
having nothing - your look -

singing to me all out of tune - your mouth -  
seeing me and smiling - your mouth -

seeing you seeing me - my eyes -  
watching you watching me - your eyes -

loving you liking me -

Missing you missing me.

*Sad stories*

You pretended they weren't there but I saw the lie staring me in the face.

You gave me your mother's music,  
your real name, all the languages you speak -

So what's the word for the mirror of cold Atlantic seas reflected between us when you told me to  
open my eyes?

Can you say it in Russian? German? French?

When you said "I want to look at you"  
I wonder what you saw -

I wonder what you meant.

Spell it out in hieroglyphics - the way my glasses fogged up in the rain when you kissed my nose,  
then walked away.

Tell me something I can understand -  
show me that scene from *Casablanca*,  
explain it again and again -

Fuck you and all your languages. I can't even speak one. I have to write it down.

*Brushstrokes*

If I could illustrate the sound of your  
nine a.m. breathing, the flicker of  
your early morning eyes, sleeping  
and sad and laughing, blue;

If I could smudge the lines you carve  
into my spine when you trace the shape of  
my tattoo with soft, silent fingertips;

If I could paint the feeling of your skin  
on my skin and sweep the colors  
across the wall, through the ceiling  
behind the sky;

If I could draw your drunk little smile,  
your skinny vegan arms and the stories  
you hide under superhero t-shirts -

If I could find a way to capture you, to keep your  
arm around me and smoke blowing through me and  
tuck it in a small glass jar, let it break, then walk away;  
then it might not sting so bad;  
then it might not melt me so.

*Masterpiece*

If it makes my insides less grotesque  
I'll paint a messy carousel on the inside  
of my garage.

I will conduct a sordid orchestra to play  
big heartbreaking numbers, to  
perform discordant harmonies that  
    only I will hear.

If it gives that so-sought-after  
knot inside my throat, that welling in the place  
beneath my knees, I will write letters to the boys  
    who lied and left me hollow

(and I won't even read them;  
    I will waste all the ink I own  
        reminiscing bitterly on all  
        the wasted time.)

I'll put everything I have into a  
torn-up photograph, a snapshot of the  
birthdays and the parties and  
the spark I spent on other people who  
    didn't even know my name,

    and I'll go to more birthdays  
    and I'll go to more parties

then I'll stand back and look at what I've done  
tilt it to the right  
    all crooked now